

JUBILEE SONGS:

AS SUNG BY THE

JUBILEE SINGERS,

OF FISK UNIVERSITY,

(NASHVILLE, TENN.)

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

NEW YORK:

Published by BIGLOW & MAIN, 425 Broome St.

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PREFACE.

IN giving these melodies to the world for the first time in a tangible form, it seems desirable to say a few words about them as judged from a musical stand-point. It is certain that the critic stands completely disarmed in their presence. He must not only recognize their immense power over audiences which include many people of the highest culture, but, if he be not thoroughly encased in prejudice, he must yield a tribute of admiration on his own part, and acknowledge that these songs touch a chord which the most consummate art fails to reach. Something of this result is doubtless due to the singers as well as to their melodies. The excellent rendering of the Jubilee Band is made more effective and the interest is intensified by the comparison of their former state of slavery and degradation with the present prospects and hopes of their race, which crowd upon every listener's mind during the singing of their songs. Yet the power is chiefly in the songs themselves, and hence a brief analysis of them will be of interest.

Their origin is unique. They are never "composed" after the manner of ordinary music, but spring into life, ready made, from the white heat of religious fervor during some protracted meeting in church or camp. They come from no musical cultivation whatever, but are the simple, ecstatic utterances of wholly untutored minds. From so unpromising a source we could reasonably expect only such a mass of crudities as would be unendurable to the cultivated ear. On the contrary, however, the cultivated listener confesses to a new charm, and to a power never before felt, at least in its kind. What can we infer from this but that the child-like, receptive minds of these unfortunates were wrought upon with a true inspiration, and that this gift was bestowed upon them by an ever-watchful Father, to quicken the pulses of life, and to keep them from the state of hopeless apathy into which they were in danger of falling.

A technical analysis of these melodies shows some interesting facts. The first peculiarity that strikes the attention is in the rhythm. This is often complicated, and sometimes strikingly original. The second line of the "Rocks and the Mountains," (page 24) is one of many illustrations of this statement. But although so new and strange, it is most remarkable that these effects are so extremely satisfactory. We see few cases of what theorists call *mis-form*, although the student of musical composition is likely to fall into that error long after he has mastered the leading principles of the art.

Another noticeable feature of the songs is the entire absence of triple time, or three-part measure among them. The reason for this is doubtless to be found in the beating of the foot and the swaying of the body, which are such frequent accompaniments of the singing. These motions are in even measure, and in perfect time; and so it will be found that however broken and seemingly irregular the movement of the music, it is always capable of the most exact measurement. In other words, its irregularities invariably conform to the "higher law" of the perfect rhythmic flow.

It is a coincidence worthy of note that more than half the melodies in this collection are in the same scale as that in which Scottish music is written; that is, with the fourth and seventh tones omitted. The fact that the music of the ancient Greeks is also said to have been written in this scale, suggests an interesting inquiry as to whether it may not be a peculiar language of nature, or a simpler alphabet than the ordinary diatonic scale, in which the uncultivated mind finds its easiest expression.

The variety of forms presented in these songs is truly surprising, when their origin is considered. This diversity is greater than the listener would at first be likely to suppose. The frequent recurrence of one particular effect, viz.: that given on the last syllable of the word "chariot" in the first line of "Swing Low," conveys an impression of sameness which is not justified by the general structure of the songs. The themes are quite as distinct and varied as in the case of more pretentious compositions.

One criticism has been made on the singing of the Jubilee Band, which deserves notice. It has been frequently said, especially by persons who have been at the South, and heard the singing of the camp-meetings: "This music is too good. It is too refined. There is too nice a balancing of the parts, and too much delicate shading to be a genuine representation of slave-music." The objection is easily answered, in this wise. The manner and style of singing at the South depends entirely upon the degree of culture in the congregation. There is a very great difference between the lowest and the highest, in this respect. It cannot be thought strange that the musical feeling which is so prolific in original melodies should soon find its way to the enjoyment of harmony in the singing of various parts. The Jubilee Singers, no doubt, represent the highest average of culture among the colored people, but the singing of these songs is all their own, and the quickness with which they have received impressions and adopted improvements from the cultivated music they have heard, only affords an additional illustration of the high capabilities of the race.

The public may feel assured that the music herein given is entirely correct. It was taken down from the singing of the band, during repeated interviews held for the purpose, and no line or phrase was introduced that did not receive full indorsement from the singers. Some of the phrases and turns in the melodies are so peculiar that the listener might not unreasonably suppose them to be incapable of exact representation by ordinary musical characters. It is found, however, that they all submit to the laws of musical language, and if they are sung or played exactly as written, all the characteristic effects will be reproduced.

It is believed that the selection of melodies here presented will not only prove interesting as a study, but that they will, by their quaint forms, their inherent beauty, and their genuine pathos, bring a new element of pleasure into any social circle into which they may be introduced.

THEO. F. SEWARD,
ORANGE, N. J.

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JUBILEE SONGS.

It will be observed that in most of these songs the first strain is of the nature of a chorus or refrain, which is to be sung after each verse. The return to this chorus should be made without breaking the time.

In some of the verses the syllables do not correspond exactly to the notes in the music. The adaptation is so easy that it was thought best to leave it to the skill of the singer rather than to confuse the eye by too many notes. The music is in each case carefully adapted to the first verse. Whatever changes may be necessary in singing the remaining verses will be found to involve no difficulty.

Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord!



No- bod - y knows the trou-ble I see, Lord, No- bod - y knows the



trou-ble I see, No- bod - y knows the trou-ble I see, Lord,



No- bod - y knows like Je - sus, Broth - ers, will you



pray for me, Broth-ers will you pray for me, Broth-ers, will you



pray for me And help me to drive old Sa - tan a - way.

2 Sisters, will you pray for me, &c.

3 Mothers, will you pray for me, &c.

4 Preachers, will you pray for me, &c.

Swing Low, sweet Chariot.

Swing low, sweet char - i - ot, Com-ing for to car-ry me home,

Fine.

Swing low, sweet char - i - ot, Com-ing for to car-ry me home.

1. I looked o - ver Jor - dan, and what did I see,
2. If you get there be - - fore I do,

Com - ing for to car - ry me home? A band of an - gels
Com ing for to car - ry me home, Tell all my friends I'm

D. C.

coming af - ter me, Com - ing for to car - ry me home.
com - ing too, Com - ing for to car - ry me home.

3.

The brightest day that ever I saw,
Coming for to carry me home,
When Jesus washed my sins away,
Coming for to carry me home.
Swing low, &c.

4.

I'm sometimes up and sometimes down,
Coming for to carry me home,
But still my soul feels heavenly bound,
Coming for to carry me home.
Swing low, &c.

Room Enough.

1. Oh, brothers don't stay a - way, Brothers don't stay a - way,

Broth-ers don't stay a - way, Don't stay a - way.

For my Lord says there's room e - nough, Room e - nough in the

Heav'ns for you, My Lord says there's room enough, Don't stay a - way.

2 Oh, mourners don't stay away,
 CHO.—For the Bible says there's room enough, etc.

3 Oh, sinners don't stay away,
 CHO.—For the angel says there's room enough, etc.

4 Oh, children don't stay away,
 CHO.—For Jesus says there's room enough, etc.

* The peculiar accent here makes the words sound thus : "rooma nough."

O Redeemed.

CHORUS.

1. O redeemed, re - deemed, I'm washed in the blood of the Lamb, O re -

deemed, redeemed, I'm washed in the blood of the Lamb. Although you see me

going a-long so, Washed in the blood of the Lamb, I have my tri - als

here be - low, Washed in the blood of the Lamb. O redeemed, redeemed.

2 When I was a mourner just like you,
Washed in the blood of the Lamb,
I fasted and prayed till I got through,
Washed in the blood of the Lamb.
O redeemed, &c.

3 Religion's like a blooming rose,
Washed in the blood of the Lamb,
As none but those that feel it knows,
Washed in the blood of the Lamb.
O redeemed, &c.

* Attention is called to this characteristic manner of connecting the last strain with the chorus in the D. C.

Roll, Jordan, Roll.

Roll, Jor-dan, roll, roll, Jor-dan, roll, I want to go to

The first system of musical notation for the song 'Roll, Jordan, Roll.' It consists of a treble and a bass staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. The lyrics 'Roll, Jor-dan, roll, roll, Jor-dan, roll, I want to go to' are written below the treble staff.

Heav - en when I die, To hear Jor - dan roll.

The second system of musical notation. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics 'Heav - en when I die, To hear Jor - dan roll.' are written below the treble staff.

1. Oh, broth-ers, you ought t'have been there, Yes, my Lord ! A

The third system of musical notation. It continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics '1. Oh, broth-ers, you ought t'have been there, Yes, my Lord ! A' are written below the treble staff.

sit ting in the King-dom, to hear Jor - dan roll. *D. C.*

The fourth system of musical notation. It concludes the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics 'sit ting in the King-dom, to hear Jor - dan roll.' are written below the treble staff. The system ends with a double bar line and the instruction 'D. C.' (Da Capo).

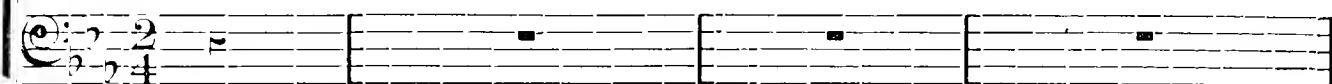
- 2 Oh, preachers, you ought t'have been there, etc.
- 3 Oh, sinners, you ought, etc.
- 4 Oh, mourners, you ought, etc.
- 5 Oh, seekers, you ought, etc.
- 6 Oh, mothers, you ought, etc.
- 7 Oh, children, you ought, etc.

Turn back Pharaoh's Army.

SOLO. *Moderato.*



1. Gwine to write to Mas - sa Je - sus, To send some val - iant
2. If you want your souls con - vert - ed, You'd bet - ter be a -



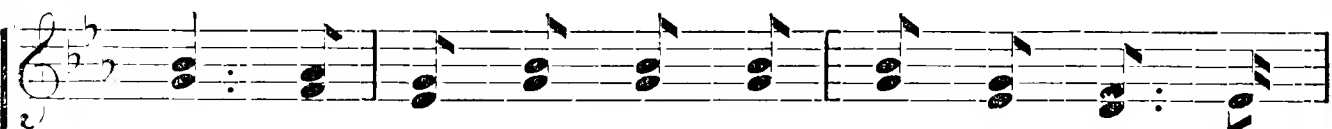
CHORUS. *Faster.*



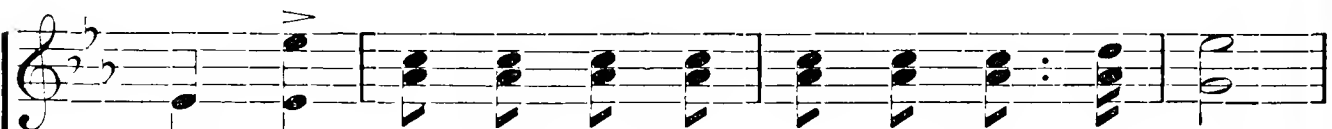
- sol - dier, To turn back Pha - raoh's ar - my, Hal - le -
- pray - ing, To turn back Pha - raoh's ar - my, etc.



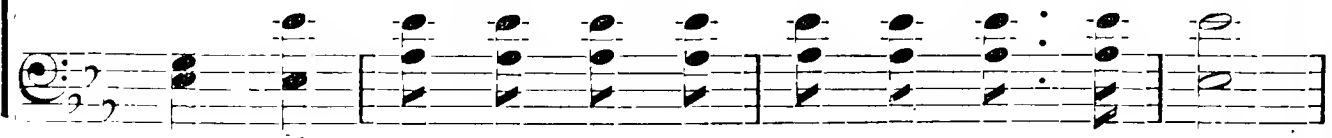
- lu! To turn back Pha-raoh's ar - my, Hal le - lu -

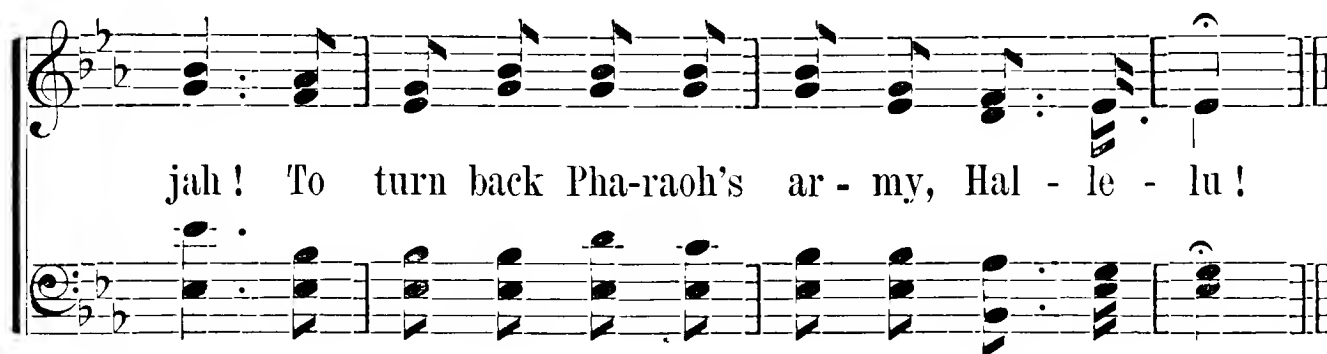


- jah! To turn back Pha - raoh's ar - my, Hal - le -



- lu! To turn back Pha-raoh's ar - my, Hal - le - lu -





jah! To turn back Pha-raoh's ar - my, Hal - le - lu!

3.

You say you are a soldier,
Fighting for your Saviour,
To turn back Pharaoh's army, etc.

5.

When Moses smote the water,
The children all passed over,
And turned back Pharaoh's army. etc.

4.

When the children were in bondage,
They cried unto the Lord,
He turned back Pharaoh's army, etc.

6.

When Pharaoh crossed the water,
The waters came together,
And drowned ole Pharaoh's army, etc.

Rise, Mourners.*



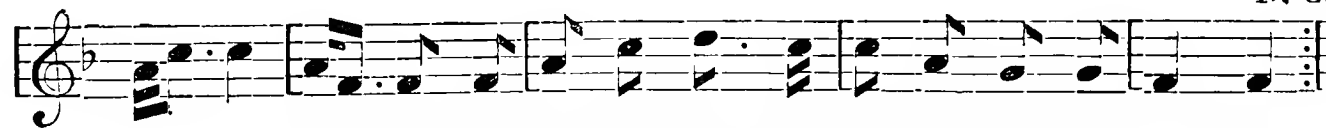
1. Rise, mourners, rise mourners, O can't you rise and

FINE.



tell, What the Lord has done for you. Yes, he's tak-en my feet out of the

D. C.



mi - ry clay, And he's placed them on the right side of my Fa - ther.

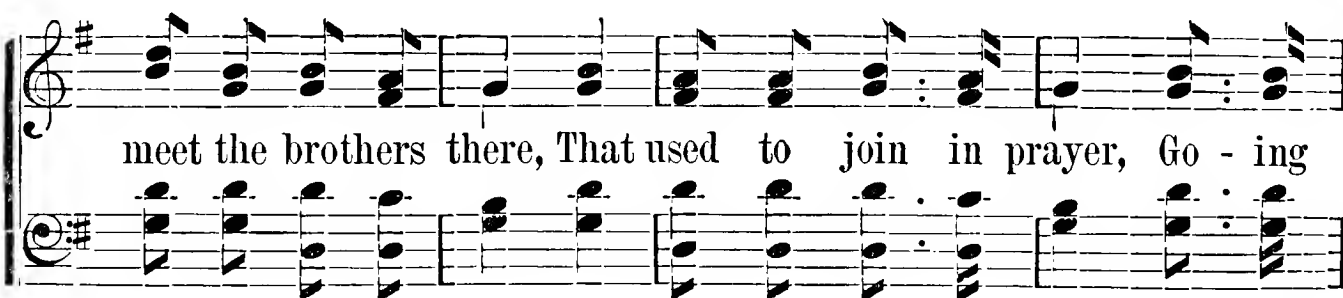
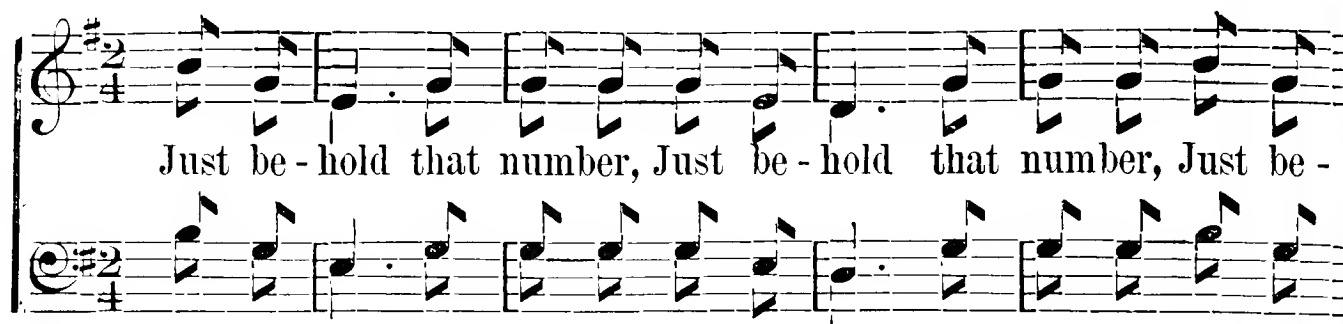
2 Rise, seekers, rise, seekers, etc.

3 Rise, sinners, rise, sinners, etc.

4 Rise, brothers, rise, brothers, etc.

* This hymn is sung with great unction while "seekers" are going forward to the altar.

From every Graveyard.



2 Going to meet the sisters there,
That used to join in prayer,
Going up, through great tribulation,
From every graveyard.

CHO.—Just behold that number, &c.

3 Going to meet the preachers there,
That used to join, &c,

CHO.—Just behold that number, &c.

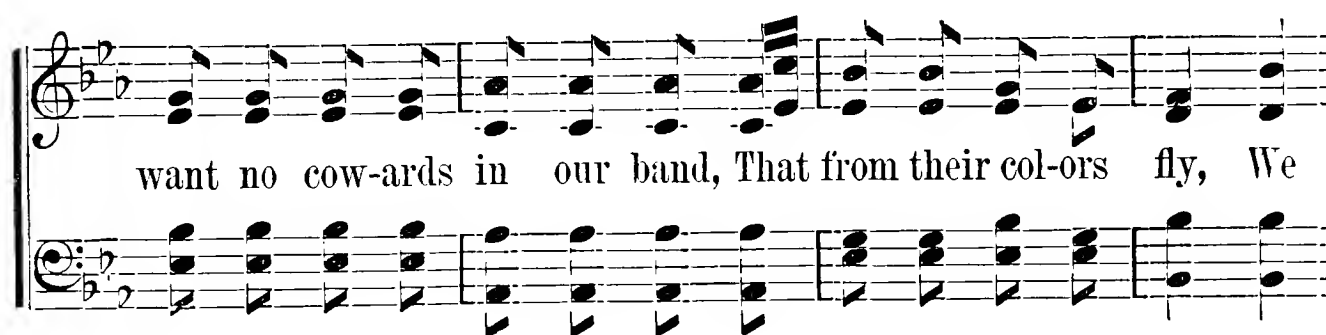
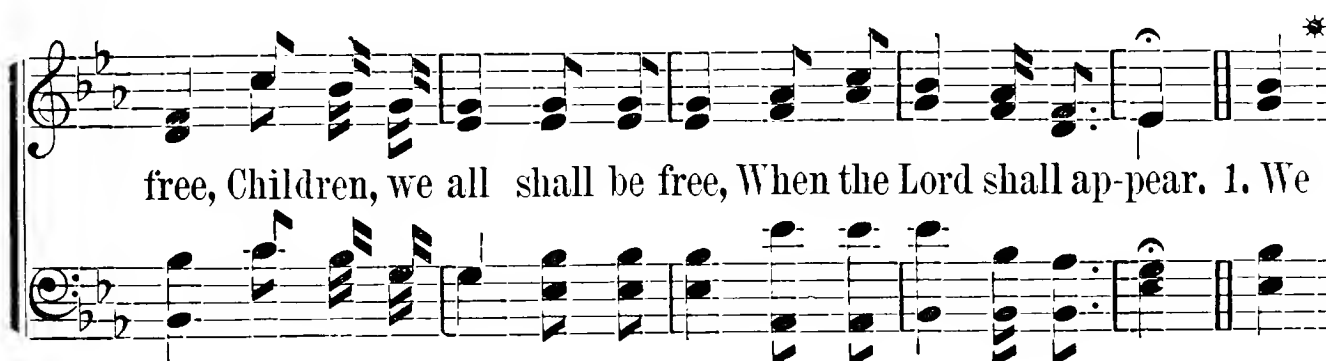
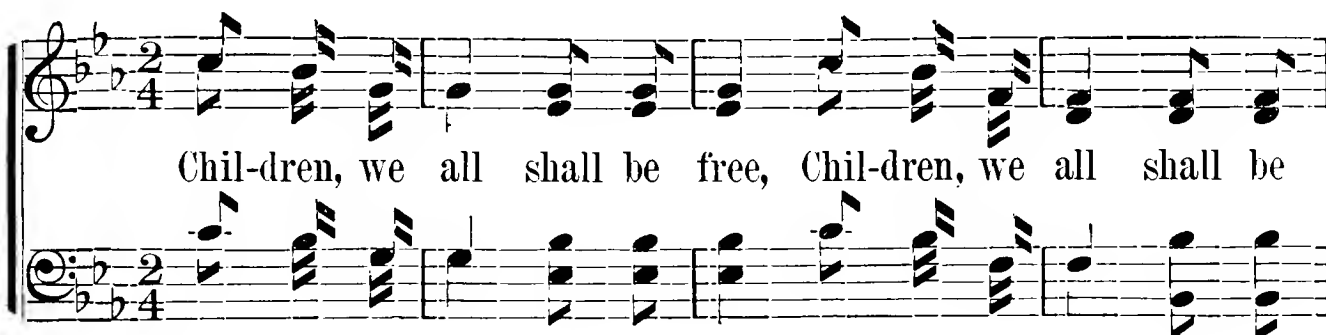
4 Going to meet the mourners there,
That used to join, &c.

CHO.—Just behold that number, &c.

5 Going to meet the Christians there,
That used to join, &c.

CHO.—Just behold that number, &c.

Children, we all shall be free.



2 We see the pilgrim as he lies,
 With glory in his soul ;
 To Heaven he lifts his longing eyes,
 And bids this world adieu.
 CH0.—Children, we all shall be free, etc.

3 Give ease to the sick, give sight to the blind,
 Enable the cripple to walk ;
 He'll raise the dead from under the earth,
 And give them permission to fly.
 CH0.—Children, we all shall be free, etc.

* The words, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," are sometimes sung to this strain.

I'm a Rolling.

I'm a roll-ing, I'm a roll-ing, I'm a roll-ing thro' an un-

friend-ly world, I'm a roll-ing, I'm a roll-ing thro' an

un-friend-ly world. 1. O broth-ers wont you help me

O broth-ers, wont you help me to pray, O broth-ers wont you

help me, Wont you help me in the ser-vice of the Lord? *

* Return to the beginning in exact time.

2 O sisters, wont you help me,
 O sisters, wont you help me to pray;
 O sisters, wont you help me,
 Wont you help me in the service of the Lord!
 CHO.—I'm a-rolling, &c.

3 O preachers, wont you help me,
 O preachers, wont you help me to fight;
 O preachers, wont you help me,
 Wont you help me in the service of the Lord?
 CHO.—I'm a-rolling, &c.

I'll hear the Trumpet Sound.

You may bu - ry me in the East, You may bu - ry me
 in the West; But I'll hear the trumpet sound In that morning.
 In that morn-ing, my Lord, How I long to go, For to
 hear the trum pet sound, In that morn - ing.

2 Father Gabriel in that day,
 He'll take wings and fly away,
 For to hear the trumpet sound
 In that morning.
 You may bury him in the East,
 You may bury him in the West;
 But he'll hear the trumpet sound,
 In that morning.

CHO.—In that morning, &c.

3 Good old christians in that day,
 They'll take wings and fly away, &c.

4 Good old preachers, &c.

5 In that dreadful Judgment day
 I'll take wings and fly away, &c.

* Repeat the music of the first strain for all the verses but the first.

Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel.

Sung in Unison.



Did - n't my Lord de - liv - er Dan - iel, D' - liver



Dan - iel, d'-liver Dan - iel, Did-n't my Lord d' - liv - er



Dan - iel, And why not a ev - e - ry man? He de -



- liv - er'd Dan - iel from the li - on's den, Jo - nah from the



bel - ly of the whale, And the He-brew child-ren from the



fi - ry fur-nace, And why not ev - e - ry man? Didn't



my Lord de-liv-er Dan - iel, D'liver Dan - iel, d'liver Dan - iel, Didn't



my Lord de - liv - er Dan - iel, And why not a ev - e - ry man?

* Go on without pause, leaving out two beats of the measure.

2D VERSE.



The moon run down in a purple stream, The sun for-bear to

D. C. "Didn't my Lord."



shine, And ev-e-ry star dis-ap-pear, King Je-sus shall be mine.

3D VERSE.



The wind blows East and the wind blows West, It blows like the judgment

D. C. "Didn't my Lord."



day, And every poor soul that never did pray, 'll be glad to pray that day.

4TH VERSE.



I set my foot on the Gos-pel ship, And the



ship it be gin to sail, It land-ed me o-ver on

D. C. "Didn't my Lord."

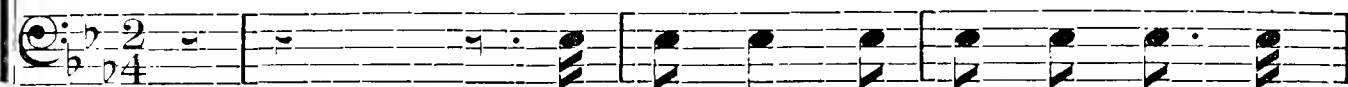


Canaan's shore, And I'll nev-er come back a-ny more.

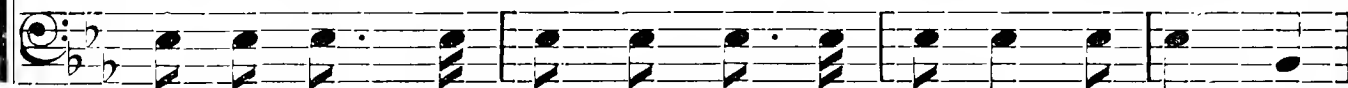
I've just come from the Fountain.



1. I've just come from the foun-tain, I've just come from the
2. Been drink-ing from the foun-tain, Been drink-ing, etc.



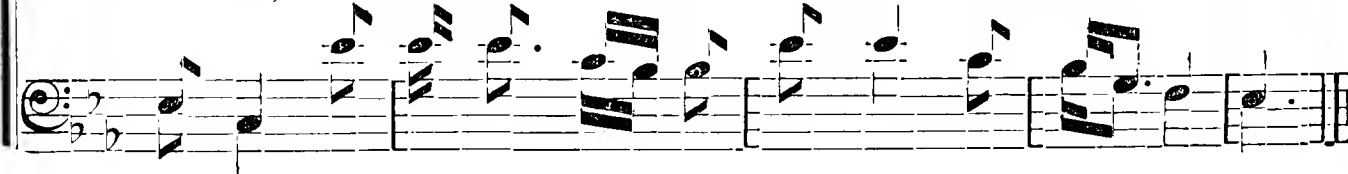
foun-tain, Lord ! I've just come from the fountain, His name's so



sweet. O Broth-ers, I love Je-sus, O Broth-ers, I love



Je sus, O Broth-ers I love Je-sus, His name's so sweet.



3 I found free grace at the fountain,
I found free grace, etc.

CH0.—O, preachers, I love Jesus, etc.

4 My soul's set free at the fountain,
My soul's set free, etc.

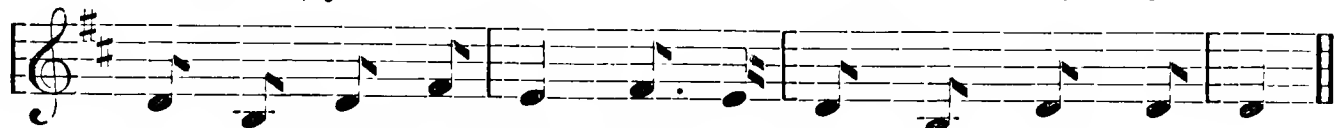
CH0.—O, sinners, I love Jesus, etc.

* The Tenors usually sing the melody from this point.

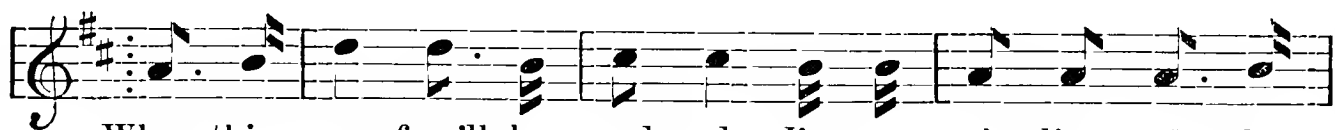
Children, you'll be called on.



1. Chil-dren, you'll be called on To march in the field of

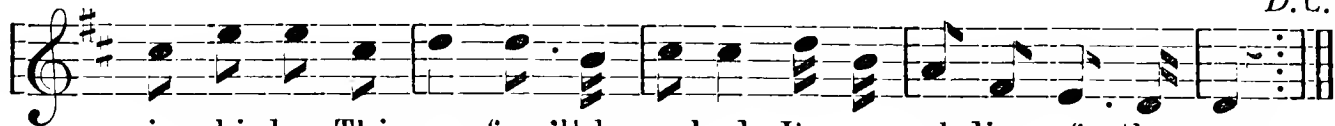


bat - tle, When this war - fare'll be end - ed, Hal - le - lu.



When this war-fare'll be end - ed, I'm a sol - dier of the

D.C.



ju - bi - lee, This warfare'll be end-ed, I'm a sol-dier of the cross.

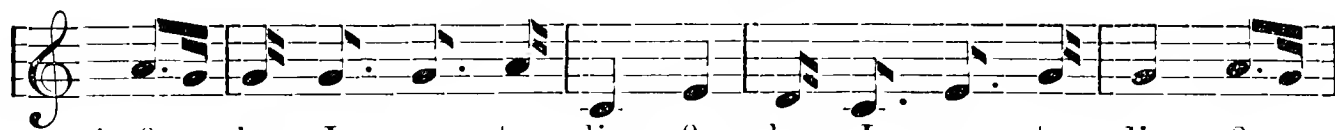
2 Preachers, you'll be called on, etc.
CH0.—When this warfare, etc.

3 Sinners, you'll be called on, etc.
CH0.—When this warfare, etc.

4 Seekers, you'll be called on, etc.
CH0.—When this warfare, etc.

5 Christians, you'll be called on, etc.
CH0.—When this warfare, etc.

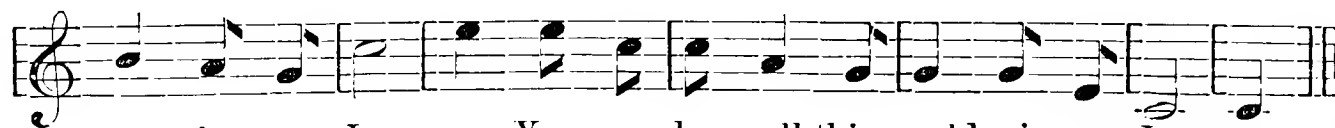
Give me Jesus.



1. O when I come to die, O when I come to die, O



when I come to die—give me Je - sus. Give me Je -



- sus, give me Je - sus, You may have all this world, give me Je - sus.

2 In the morning when I rise,
In the morning when I rise,
In the morning when I rise—give me Jesus, etc.

3 Dark midnight was my cry,
Dark midnight was my cry,
Dark midnight was my cry—give me Jesus, etc.

4 I heard the mourner say,
I heard the mourner say,
I heard the mourner say—give me Jesus, etc.

Gwine to ride up in the Chariot.

SOLO. CHORUS.

1. Gwine to ride up in the chariot, Soon-er in the morn-ing,

SOLO. CHORUS.

Ride up in the chariot, Soon - er in the morn - ing,

SOLO. CHORUS.

Ride up in the chariot, Soon-er in the morning, And I

hope I'll join the band. O Lord have mer - cy on me,

O Lord have mer - cy on me ; O Lord have

D. C.

mer - cy on me, And I hope I'll join the band.

2 Gwine to meet my brother there, Sooner, etc.
CH0.—0 Lord have mercy, etc.

3 Gwine to chatter with the Angels, Sooner, etc.
CH0.—0 Lord have mercy, etc.

4 Gwine to meet my massa Jesus, Sooner, etc.
CH0.—0 Lord have mercy, etc.

5 Gwine to walk and talk with Jesus, Sooner, etc.
CH0.—0 Lord have mercy, etc.

We'll die in the field.

UNISON.

1. 0 what do you say, seek - ers, 0 what do you say,

seek-ers ; 0 what do you say, seek-ers, A - bout that Gos-pel war.

And I will die in the field, Will die in the field ;

Will die in the field, I'm on my jour-ney home.

2 0 what do you say, brothers, etc.

3 0 what do you say, christians, etc.

4 0 what do you say, preachers, etc.

Go down, Moses.

1. When Is-ra-el was in E-gypt's land : Let my peo - ple go,

Op-pressed so hard they could not stand, Let my peo - ple go.

Go down, Mo - ses, way down in E - gypt land,

Tell ole Pha - roh, Let my peo - ple go.

2 Thus saith the Lord, bold Moses said,
 Let my people go ;
 If not I'll smite your first-born dead,
 Let my people go.
 Go down, Moses, etc.

3 No more shall they in bondage toil,
 Let my people go ;
 Let them come out with Egypt's spoil,
 Let my people go.
 Go down, Moses, etc.

4 When Israel out of Egypt came,
 Let my people go ;
 And left the proud oppressive land,
 Let my people go.
 Go down, Moses, etc.

5.
O, 'twas a dark and dismal night,
Let my people go;
When Moses led the Israelites,
Let my people go.

6.
'Twas good old Moses and Aaron, too,
Let my people go;
'Twas they that led the armies through,
Let my people go.

7.
The Lord told Moses what to do,
Let my people go;
To lead the children of Israel through,
Let my people go.

8.
O come along Moses, you'll not get lost,
Let my people go;
Stretch out your rod and come across,
Let my people go.

9.
As Israel stood by the water side,
Let my people go;
At the command of God it did divide,
Let my people go.

10.
When they had reached the other shore,
Let my people go;
They sang a song of triumph o'er,
Let my people go.

11.
Pharaoh said he would go across,
Let my people go;
But Pharaoh and his host were lost,
Let my people go.

12.
O Moses the cloud shall cleave the way,
Let my people go;
A fire by night, a shade by day,
Let my people go.

13.
You'll not get lost in the wilderness,
Let my people go;
With a lighted candle in your breast,
Let my people go.

14.
Jordan shall stand up like a wall,
Let my people go;
And the walls of Jericho shall fall
Let my people go.

15.
Your foes shall not before you stand,
Let my people go;
And you'll possess fair Canaan's land,
Let my people go.

16.
'Twas just about in harvest time,
Let my people go;
When Joshua led his host divine,
Let my people go.

17.
O let us all from bondage flee,
Let my people go;
And let us all in Christ be free,
Let my people go.

18.
We need not always weep and moan,
Let my people go;
And wear these slavery chains forlorn,
Let my people go.

19.
This world's a wilderness of woe,
Let my people go;
O, let us on to Canaan go,
Let my people go.

20.
What a beautiful morning that will be,
Let my people go;
When time breaks up in eternity,
Let my people go.

21.
The Devil he thought he had me fast,
Let my people go;
But I thought I'd break his chains at
Let my people go. [last,

22.
O take yer shoes from off yer feet,
Let my people go;
And walk into the golden street,
Let my people go.

23.
I'll tell you what I likes de best,
Let my people go;
It is the shouting Methodist,
Let my people go.

24.
I do believe without a doubt,
Let my people go;
That a Christian has the right to shout,
Let my people go.

The Rocks and the Mountains.

Oh, the rocks and the mountains shall all flee a - way, And

you shall have a new hid-ing-place that day. Seek-er, seek-er, give

up your heart to God, And you shall have a new hiding-place that day. *D.C.*

Oh, the rocks and the mountains shall all flee away,
And you shall have a new hiding-place that day.

Doubter, doubter, give up your heart to God,
And you shall have a new hiding place that day.
Oh, the rocks, etc.

Mourner, mourner, give up your heart to God, etc.

Sinner, sinner, give up your heart to God, etc.

Sister, sister, give up your heart to God, etc.

Mother, mother, give up your heart to God, etc.

Children, children, give up your heart to God, etc.

Been a Listening.

Been a listening all the night long, Been a listening all the night long, Been a

list-en-ing all the night long, To hear some sin-ner pray. 1. Some

say that John the Bap-tist was noth-ing but a Jew, But the

D.C. Been a listening.
Ho - ly Bi - ble tells us he was a preach - er too.

2 Go read the third of Matthew, and read the chapter through,
It is the guide for Christians, and tells them what to do.

CH0.—Been a listening all the night long, etc.

Keep me from sinking Down.

p Oh, Lord, Oh, my Lord! *f* Oh, my good Lord! *p* Keep

FINE. f me from sink-ing down. I tell you what I

p mean to do; *f* Keep me from sink - ing down: I

p mean to go to heav-en too; *D.C.* Keep me from sink-ing down.

2 I look up yonder, and what do I see ;
Keep me from sinking down :
I see the angels beckoning to me ;
Keep me from sinking down.
Oh, Lord, etc.

3 When I was a mourner just like you ;
Keep me from sinking down :
I mourned and mourned till I got through ;
Keep me from sinking down.
Oh, Lord, etc.

4 I bless the Lord I'm gwine to die :
Keep me from sinking down :
I'm gwine to judgment by-and-by ;
Keep me from sinking down.
Oh, Lord, etc.

I'm a trav'ling to the Grave.

CHORUS.

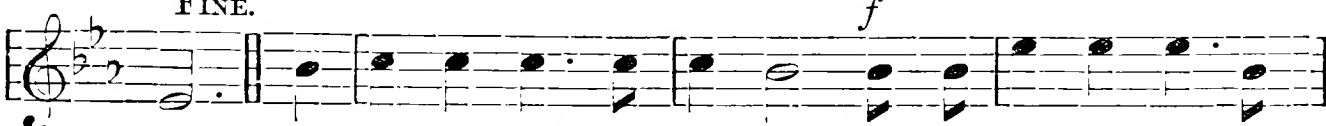


I'm a trav'ling to the grave, I'm a trav'ling to the



grave, my Lord, I'm a trav'ling to the grave, For to lay this bod - y

FINE.



down. 1. My Mas-sa died a shout-ing, Sing-ing glo-ry hal - le -



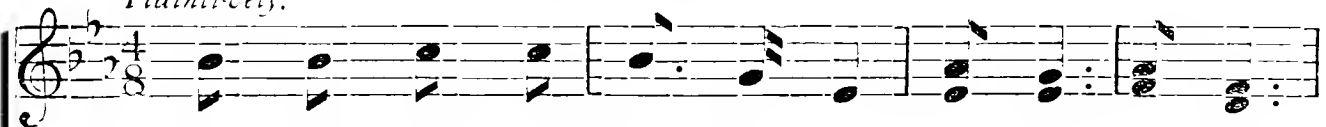
lu - jah, The last word he said to me, Wasa-bout Je - ru - sa - lem.

2 My Missis died a shouting, singing glory, hallelujah, etc.

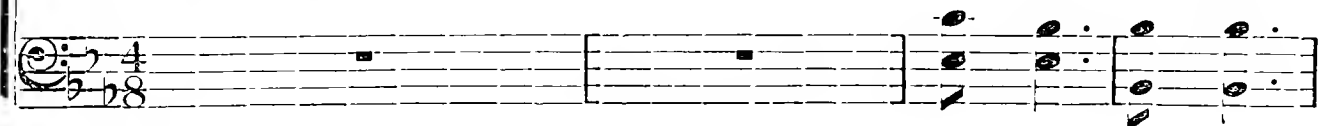
3 My brother, etc.

4 My sister, etc.

Many thousand Gone.

Plaintively.

1. No more auc - tion block for me, No more, no more.



No more auc - tion block for me, Man - y thou-sand gone.



2 No more peck o' corn for me, etc.

3 No more driver's lash for me, etc.

4 No more pint o' salt for me, etc.

5 No more hundred lash for me, etc.

6 No more mistress' call for me, etc.

Steal Away.

p

Steal a - way, steal a - way, steal a - way to Je - sus!

f *p*

Steal a - way, steal a - way home, I haint got long to stay here.

f

1. My Lord calls me, He calls me by the thun - der ; The
2. Green trees are bend - ing, poor sin - ners stand trem - bling ; The

p *D. C.*

trumpet sounds it in my soul,—I hain't got long to stay here.
trumpet sounds it in my soul,—I hain't got long to stay here.

3 My Lord calls me—He calls me by the lightning ;
The trumpet sounds it in my soul :
I hain't got long to stay here.
CHO.—Steal away, &c.

4 Tombstones are bursting—poor sinners stand trembling ;
The trumpet sounds it in my soul :
I hain't got long to stay here.
CHO,—Steal away, &c.

INTRODUCTION

BY

THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.

IN giving this little volume to the public, it seems due to all concerned that some statements should be made respecting the SONGS, the SINGERS, and the INTERESTS they represent.

1. THE SONGS.—Of these neither the words or the music have ever before been published, or even reduced to written form, at least, to the knowledge of the Jubilee Singers.*

The most of them they learned in childhood—the others, which were not common in the portion of the South in which they were raised, they have received directly from those who were accustomed to sing them. These songs, therefore, can be relied upon as the genuine songs of their race, being in words and music the same as sung by their ancestors in the cabin, on the plantation, and in their religious worship.

By the severe discipline to which the Jubilee Singers have been subjected in the school-room, they have been educated out of the peculiarities of the Negro dialect, and they do not attempt to imitate the peculiar pronunciation of their race. They have also received considerable musical instruction, and have become familiar with much of our best sacred and classical music, and this has modified their manner of execution. They do not attempt to imitate the grotesque bodily motions or the drawling intonations that often characterize the singing of great congregations of the colored people in their excited religious meetings.

It is true, however, both of the words and the music that whatever modification they have undergone, has been wholly in the minds of the Singers under the influence of the training and culture they have received in the University of which they are members.

The words were taken down from their lips by Mr. WHITE, who has had the charge of their musical training, and the music was reduced to writing by THEO. F. SEWARD, Editor of the *New York Musical Gazette*, and as he states in his introduction, “Every melody was tested by being played on the pianoforte, and no line or phrase was introduced that did not receive full indorsement from the Singers.”

* “I’m traveling to the grave,” and “Keep me from sinking down,” were taken down at a concert, after the other pieces were in the hands of the printer, and this introduction prepared; and before it was known that they had been previously written by Mr. Robbins Battell, and published, with pianoforte accompaniment, by Messrs. Oliver Ditson & Co., of Boston.—[T. F. S.]

It is believed that the *form* and *spirit* of the best Spiritual Songs of slave-life in the South were never before so perfectly presented to the public.

2. THE JUBILEE SINGERS are a Company of Students of Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn., organized by and under the direction of GEO. L. WHITE, Treasurer of the University, and composed as follows:

MISS ELLA SHEPPARD, Pianist and Soprano.

“ JENNIE JACKSON, Soprano.

“ MAGGIE PORTER, Soprano.

“ MINNIE TATE, Contralto.

“ ELIZA WALKER, Contralto.

MR. THOMAS RUTLING, Tenor.

“ BEN. M. HOLMES, Tenor.

“ I. P. DICKERSON. Bass.

“ GREENE EVANS, Bass.

Seven of the nine have been slaves, and were freed by the Emancipation Proclamation. The other two were born free, but have always lived in the South. They became members of Fisk University in order to secure a liberal Christian education that should fit them to become the instructors of their race. Their musical training has been only incidental, while they have been pursuing their regular studies, with the exception of the special drill given during the vacation of last summer, preparatory to entering upon their present mission.

They are before the public not as professional singers, but as a company of students desirous of using their musical ability to help the University of which they are members, in the time of its necessity.

3. The INTERESTS represented by the Jubilee Singers deserve special notice.

As has been said, they are students, and are before the public in behalf of the education of their race. They represent one of the earliest established, and most successful, of the chartered educational institutions that have been founded, and are being fostered in the South, by the benevolence of the Christian and philanthropic people of the North. In themselves, they illustrate the value of these Institutions, and their singing of the spiritual songs which have cheered their ancestors in their bondage, in order to raise the needed funds to enlarge their usefulness, is a touching plea for more generous help on the part of their friends.

They hope not only to raise \$20,000 by their own efforts, but to make the friends, who shall as needed, give the hundreds of thousands which will be required to enable Fisk University to realize the hopes and plans of its founders, and to do the work for God and humanity which they believe it is possible for it to accomplish. A few words of history will, it is hoped, help them in doing this.

In October, 1865, a half-block of land in the city of Nashville, Tenn., was purchased, and the use of the large Government Hospital located on it, was secured for the purpose of establishing a permanent institution for the education of the freedmen. At that time no provision for colored children was made by either the city or State, in the public schools.

For the first two years the Institution was conducted virtually as a free public school, and had an attendance of over a thousand pupils annually. In August, 1867, the charter of Fisk University was secured, and the societies, with the help of a Board of Trustees, began in faith and hope the work of building up an institution, that should, as soon as possible, in the nature of the case, become to the colored people what the older Universities of Tennessee are to the whites.

The title to the hospital buildings was secured, a large chapel and dormitory for girls were erected, and the Academic, Normal and Collegiate Preparatory Departments were at once established.

The annual attendance since that time has been about five hundred, near one hundred of whom are from abroad and board in the Institution.

The College Department was established at the beginning of the present year, and a Freshman class of four regularly entered.

There are also four students pursuing theological studies.

Thus the work of Collegiate and Professional Education has been fairly begun, and the number of pupils who are pressing forward towards these higher departments is large.

It has therefore become an imperative necessity in the development of Fisk University to prepare for this higher educational work, by the erection of new and suitable buildings.

The question, how shall this necessity be met, has weighed heavily on the minds of teachers and pupils, as well as of the officers of the American Missionary Association, under whose fostering care the work is being carried forward. The answer has come, under God, through the instrumentality of the students themselves.

The success of the Jubilee Singers will secure the erection of Jubilee Hall, which shall stand as a memorial, and be an inspiration for the future.

It will be a testimony that "hitherto hath the Lord helped us," and will beget a faith that shall be the "substance of things hoped for."

In a broader sense, the Jubilee Singers represent the interests of the great work of the American Missionary Association, as embodied in a system of schools, reaching to every Southern State, and including six other institutions similar in character to Fisk University, and nineteen Academic Schools with Normal Departments, besides nearly one hundred common schools.

It is hoped that the visit of these students to the communities and churches that have hitherto given them a helping hand, and the touching power of their songs, as heard from their lips or learned from these pages, will result in a quickening of interest and a deepening of conviction, which will be manifest in years to come in more liberal giving.

E. M. CRAVATH, Field Secretary.

*Rooms of the American Missionary Association,
59 Reade Street, New York City, March 1st, 1872.*

NOTICES FROM THE PRESS.

SINCE the peculiar songs of the Jubilee Singers have never before been published, but have been brought to the notice of the public only as sung by them, naturally, the Singers and their songs have been spoken of together in such a way, that it is impossible fairly to present what has been said of the one without giving much that has been said of the others.

The Jubilee Songs as sung by the Jubilee Singers, have been extensively noticed in the secular and religious press during the past three months, and the extracts here presented fairly represent the present public estimate of them.

Rev. W. H. GOODRICH, D.D., of Cleveland, Ohio, says in the *N Y Evangelist*:

"We have an abundance of the best musical performance in our city, but we have never listened to any music which compared with this in sympathetic power. We have never heard voices which were blended in a harmony so absolute. With no accessory of dress, with no stage manners or claptrap of any kind, they have simply thrilled their audiences and held them spell-bound. They do not confine themselves to their own songs, but have a wide range of pieces: choruses from the operas, familiar English and Scotch ballads, and occasionally a Sunday-school hymn. Every thing becomes new under

the charm of their un-English voices. Their tones are molten sound, and their expression is quaint and instinctive. They render "Home, Sweet Home," as it never was rendered before, perhaps because only of late had they themselves a home they could call their own.

"The most remarkable part of their singing, however, is in the "Praise songs" which they bring out of their old slave-life. Born of ignorant emotion, uncorrected by any reading of Scripture, they are confused in language, broken in connection, wild and odd in suggestion, but inconceivably touching, and sometimes grand. At first you smile or laugh out at the queer association of ideas, but before you know it your eyes fill and your heart is heaving with a true devotional feeling. You see clearly that these songs have been, in their untaught years, a real liturgy, a cry of the soul to God. It is easy to understand how great congregations or household groups might have found a living and exhaustless worship in them."

Rev. THEO. L. CUYLER in the *N. Y. Tribune* says:

"I never saw a cultivated Brooklyn assemblage so moved and melted under the magnetism of music before. The wild melodies of these emancipated slaves touched the fount of tears, and gray-haired men wept like little children.

"In the programme last evening were not only the well known slave songs "Go down, Moses," "Roll, Jordan Roll," and "Turn back Pharaoh's army," but a fresh collection of the most weird and plaintive hymns sung in the plantation cabins in the dark days of bondage. One young negress—exceeding "black yet comely,"—sang a wild yet most delicious melody, "I'll hear de trumpet sound in the morning," which was the very embodiment of African heart-music. Listening to their rich, plaintive voices, one might imagine himself in the veritable Uncle Tom's cabin of the old dispensation."

Rev. H. W. BEECHER in a Lecture-room talk, says:

"We hear a good deal of fine singing in this city, but there are some things we cannot have. You can now hear the songs that have been sung by generations of benighted souls, on the plantation, by day and by night—songs that have enabled the captive to endure his chains, the mother to hope against hope, and keep her soul up when all looked black and dark; when she had parted from all she loved, and the iron had entered into her soul."

The New Haven Palladium.

"If success consists in the ability to draw a crowd, the Jubilee Singers achieved the greatest success last evening. The North Church was literally packed with eager listeners, and many were compelled to turn away for want of room. But the singers were successful beyond this. They fully met the anticipations of the audience, and showed that they had fairly won the praise that has been lavished upon them.

"The slave songs of the South have nearly passed into history. This is one of the last—the last and only chance to many—that will ever be afforded for hearing the quaint and wild strains in which the Southern negroes gave vent to their pent up feelings.

"Their Praise songs are remarkable. They are full of that uncultivated emotion which, because it is real, touches every heart. They are weird, and wild, original in style, but touching, and at times grand."

The Newark Courier.

"Space will not permit allusion to every song, but the religious melodies must not go unnoticed. The music and words were strange and weird. The sensation produced was one of joy and sadness combined; it was a study to watch the audience—some were laughing, some crying—all seemed hysterical. The melody was absolutely perfect, the time absolutely correct. They were sung generally without accompaniment of any kind. They would swing from major to minor keys and back, with strange swayings, like boughs in the wind. Fugues abounded—such fugues! but never a discord—now fast, now slow; now soft, now loud. The authorship of these songs is lost in the dark past of this strange race. They come to us now as traditions of their weary bondage."

Orange, (N. J.) Chronicle.

"The slave songs of praise were impressive and really beautiful, and what is most singular about them their origin is entirely unknown. They seem to have sprung up among the colored people without outside aid, and they are sung by none else."

Norwich Bulletin.

"Those who have heard them bear testimony to their power in rendering the songs, the very history of which is full of mournful interest. The wild melody of these emancipated slaves has a magnetism about it rarely equalled. They give the genuine soul-music of the slave cabins, and have at command a collection of the most weird and plaintive hymns peculiar to their race."

West Meriden Recorder.

"All their purely Southern melodies of the plantation, of the camp-meetings, are of such a semi-mournful cast; of such simplicity of construction, and delivered with such a freeness from affectation, that no wonder an audience is fascinated by their performance."

Jersey City Journal.

"The peculiar intonations, the sudden changes, the intense vitality of the music, the oddity of the language, all combine to make such "Jubilee" songs most effective. In the different class of songs, the plaintive and pathetic, the effect is not less noteworthy."

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